



# Lower Wolf River Bottomlands Planning Newsletter

October, 2000

## Lower Wolf River Bottomlands Boundary Alternatives Open Houses



We would like to thank folks that attended the two Open Houses and for making them so successful. Additionally, we received emails and phone calls with folks showing an interest in this project. We look forward to working with all of our planning participants.

The September 26 & 27, 2000 Lower Wolf River Bottomlands Open Houses were held at the Winchester and Bovina Town Halls. The purpose of the open houses was to give folks an opportunity to view poster-size maps of some possible project boundary alternatives, talk with staff and others, and share their comments.

Approximately, 290 people total attended these open houses.

There were 5 possible project boundary alternatives displayed, and this was the first time that these alternatives were shared with folks.

The draft project boundary alternatives were titled as: Current DNR Project Boundaries (which is depicted on the map enclosed); DNR Project Boundaries Rounded Off; the Lower Wolf River Corridor; the Lower Wolf River and Tributaries; and the Lower Wolf and Embarrass River Corridor.

These 5 possible project boundaries (see page 5 for description) were developed by the planning team applying the Criteria for Identifying Conservation and Recreation Lands within the Lower Wolf River Bottomlands (see page 2). The planning team staff drafted these possible project boundaries as a result of a June public meeting, where meeting participants asked staff to draft some project boundary alternatives. To move forward we needed the public's input on these draft project boundary alternatives.

In general, from the comments received most

folks are interested in some kind of project boundary expansion for the Lower Wolf River Bottomlands. People are interested in preserving and protecting the natural resources for the future; providing wildlife habitat; recreational opportunities; and looking for the most management and landowner options available. There were a few folks that seemed unsure if they wanted the current project boundaries expanded. Others expressed concerns with land in public ownership and the effects that may have on them as adjacent landowners. We also heard comments regarding existing management practices – which we will have an opportunity to discuss later in the planning process.



Based on responses received at the open houses and from phone calls and emails, the question now is how much of a project boundary expansion should there be. The planning team would like to narrow the 5 draft project boundary alternatives down to 3 and then have a public meeting in November to discuss and evaluate these alternatives. If you have any con-

cerns, questions or comments regarding this next step, please contact Jill Mrotek at 920/492-5830 or [mrotej@dnr.state.wi.us](mailto:mrotej@dnr.state.wi.us). We will send out more detailed information closer to the meeting dates.

### Alternative Boundary Work Group Meetings

**Tuesday, November 28th -  
Navarino Nature Center**

**Wednesday, November 29th -  
Dale Municipal Building**

(further information will be sent  
prior to the meetings)

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## Criteria for Identifying Conservation and Recreation Lands within the Lower Wolf River Bottomlands Study Area

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### **Protect the Lower Wolf River and its tributaries river shoreline.**

The area is seeing increasing pressures for development; citizens feel there is a need to protect the natural resources and scenic qualities within the Lower Wolf River Bottomlands.

**Provide an opportunity for a corridor connection for wildlife habitat and recreational opportunities.** Connection between open spaces are important for the biological diversity of many wildlife species and plant and animal communities. Recreational activities can also be provided by providing linear trails and increasing the size of properties to allow for more diverse activities.

**Provide opportunities for habitat restoration.** Maintaining, protecting, and improving the Lower Wolf River Bottomlands wetlands will provide for improved and enhanced water quality, shoreline protection, and wildlife habitat.

**Protect areas with endangered and threatened resources, and critical habitats.** For example, the Lower Wolf River Bottomlands corridor has been identified as the best bottomland hardwoods in WI. This area has a high potential for sensitive bottomland forest and wildlife species as well as many other significant natural features.

**Protect lakes with minimal development.** There are relatively few undeveloped lakes within the Lower Wolf River Bottomlands. Protecting these rare resources will help preserve them for the future.

**Include spawning areas for protection and habitat management.** The Lower Wolf River provides spawning habitat for walleye and sturgeon. To enhance these habitats additional lands to buffer and connect existing areas should be considered for a variety of fish species.

**Improve the potential for fish and wildlife and other recreational/educational opportunities.** For example, expand the boundary along the Lower Wolf River corridor to include other lands because most of the existing wildlife areas are wetland, which limits access. Also, provide for additional shoreland access (i.e. shore fishing opportunities).

**Include larger tracts of land that promote ecological and/or recreational opportunities.** As demands for land increases for development, recreational pursuits, and wildlife habitat the affordability and availability of larger acreage's decreases. Larger, continuous parcels of land provide for better land management, recreational pursuits, and hunting and trapping opportunities.

**Improve boundary definition for better land management and public access.** Avoid trespass problems and user confusion about the location of boundary by expanding property boundaries to nearby roads, and establishing a more linear boundary where necessary.

**Preserve agricultural land.** When agricultural land is included within the boundary; creative options to keep farms in production will be explored. For example, conservation easements or purchase of development rights.

(Please note that text behind the bolded criteria are just meant to give a brief explanation of criteria.)

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### Keep In Touch

*If you have questions or comments on the Lower Wolf River Bottomlands planning effort, or if have an address change, or would prefer to receive information via email, please call Jill Mrotek at (920) 492-5830 or email [mrotej@dnr.state.wi.us](mailto:mrotej@dnr.state.wi.us).*

*We're also on the web !  
[www.dnr.state.wi.us/  
master\\_planning/](http://www.dnr.state.wi.us/master_planning/)*

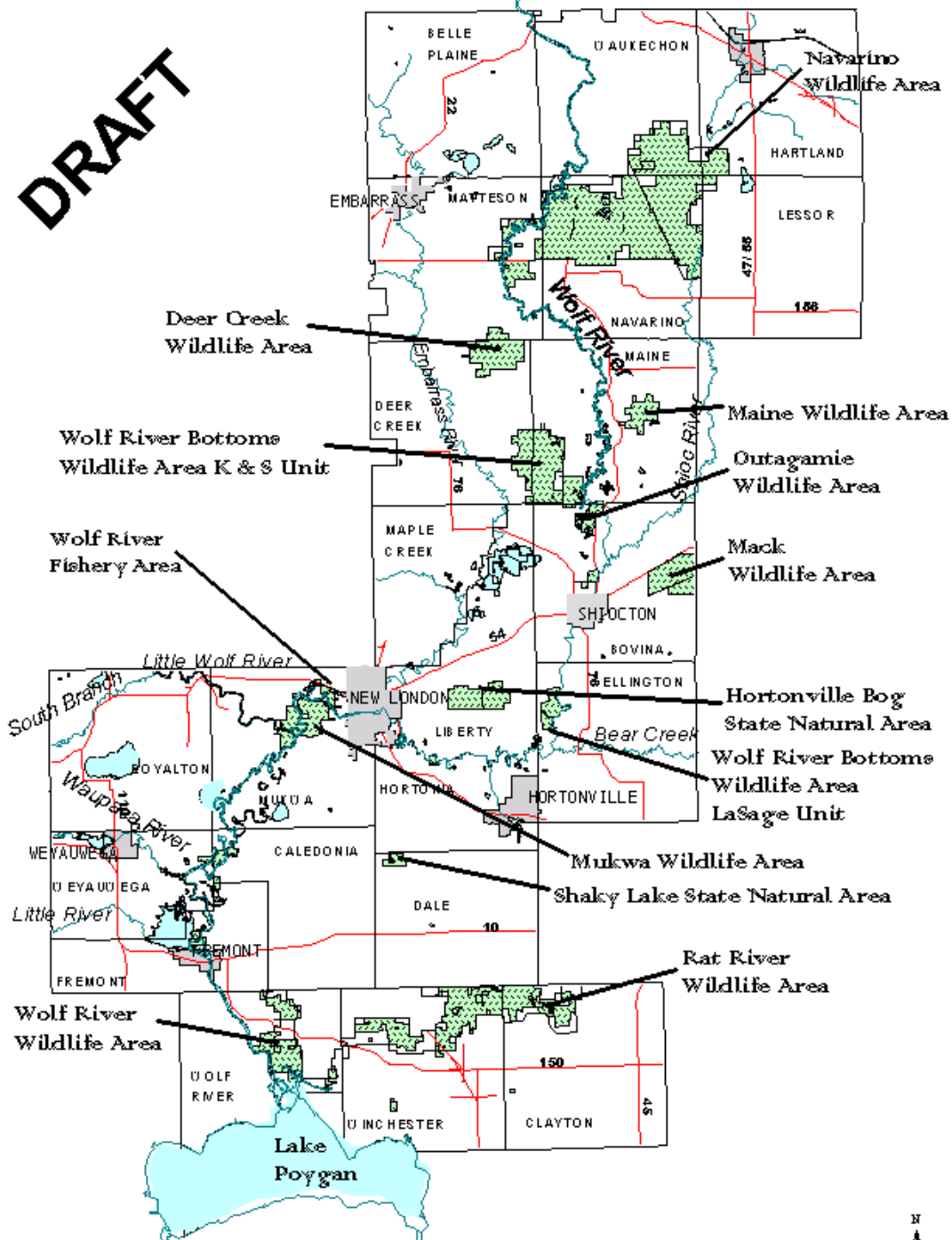
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*"Autumn is a second  
spring when every leaf is  
a flower."  
Albert Camus*



# Lower Wolf River Bottomlands Study Area

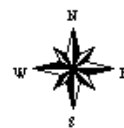
**DRAFT**



- Townships
- Openwater
- ~ Major Wolf River Tributaries
- DNR Properties Owned or Eased

0 3 6 9 12 15 Miles

1:350,000



Sept. 11, 2000

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## Descriptions of Possible Project Boundaries

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At this time, we are providing written descriptions of these 5 possible project boundary alternatives. In the future when we have fewer possible project boundary alternatives, we will provide maps. It currently isn't feasible to provide drafts of all these possible alternatives to our 600+ mailing list. We hope these descriptions will give you enough information to visualize what they look like.

The **Current DNR Project Boundaries** is the map on page 4. The hatch-marked areas shows what is owned or eased by the Department. The line around the hatched area is "the current project boundary". You'll note that some areas within the project boundary are not hatched, that is because it is privately owned. Also, each project boundary is separate.

The **DNR Project Boundaries Rounded Off** would look very similar to the Current DNR Project Boundaries but a little bit larger. That is, the proposed project boundaries for this alternative

would go out to nearby roads. For example, the Maine Wildlife Area property boundary would be starting at the northwest corner Hwy. 168 and Eskman Rd., then on the east side Navarino Rd., the south end would be bordered by Hwy. G going west to Hwy. 187 then up on Schinke Rd to Eskman Rd. Again, each project boundary would remain separate.

The **Lower Wolf River Corridor** project boundary alternative begins to connect the current project boundaries. The project boundary would follow the Wolf River and include the wetlands next and/or adjacent to the river. Lakes that are included are Partridge, Partridge Crop and Cincoe Lakes. This alternative also encompasses Department properties.

The **Lower Wolf River and Tributaries** builds off the above one by including rivers such as the Shioc, Little Wolf, Waupaca, and Little River. Additionally, this scenario begins to include some minimally developed lakes such as White

Lake in Royalton and Shroenrock Lake in Belle Plaine.

The **Lower Wolf River and Embarrass River Corridor** alternative expands on the "Tributaries" to include the Embarrass River. It includes the Embarrass River by Beaver Creek in Belle Plaine until the Embarrass meets the Wolf River. Therefore the area in this possible boundary alternative includes lands between the Embarrass River and Wolf River.

Things that are similar in these alternatives are that project boundaries were drawn to roads for easy, identifiable landmarks; cities and villages are exclusions within these boundaries; the alternatives were drafted using the criteria for identifying conservation and recreational lands; and lastly these alternatives were developed to give us a range to work with. We can edit and modify as necessary. It's just a starting point.

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## Comments Received from the Open Houses

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Following are some of the comments we received from people who attended the Open Houses. We wanted to share these with you so you may have a better idea of what folks thought about each of the proposed boundary alternatives. This is not meant to be all inclusive but just to give you a flavor.

- ☞ Current DNR Project Boundaries
  - DNR owns enough land. Take care of what you have.
  - Leave it in the hands of the landowner.
  - There is a lack of access to some properties, new boundaries would solve that problem.

- ☞ DNR Project Boundaries Rounded Off
  - It's more realistic in size/

affordable.

- Makes sense in most cases; comes out to a road. Least invasive to property owners.

- ☞ The Lower Wolf River Corridor
  - Would protect a larger area from development but I don't feel that DNR should wholly determine that.
  - It links the various projects together, yet is not so overwhelming as doing all the watershed.
  - Most reasonable in scope yet covering the length of the river.
  - Includes most valuable lands without going overboard.

- ☞ The Lower Wolf River and Tributaries
  - It takes in the important tribs

and it's a large enough area to increase the chances of land purchases to make a better impact. Too small of area wouldn't in my mind.

- I like the idea of saving land for wildlife.
- I like the idea of protecting more area – only concerned about ultimately getting a good price for the land, but would like to see our prairie, pit and tree field preserved.

- ☞ The Lower Wolf River and Embarrass River Corridor
  - I think it is the best for long range protection of the Wolf River, Embarrass River, and surrounding lake and preservation of animals, plants, and land.

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**Do You Know Someone Who Might Be  
Interested In the Lower Wolf River Bottomlands Planning Effort?**

*Encourage them to be added to our mailing list by contacting:*

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Website: [www.dnr.state.wi.us/master\\_planning/Wolf/](http://www.dnr.state.wi.us/master_planning/Wolf/)

*Thank you!*